

## **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)**

### **Farmers' Market Equipment Funds: A Funding Opportunity for Certain Farmers' Markets and Direct Marketing Farmers**

- In fiscal year (FY) 2012, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) received \$4 million to increase availability of wireless point-of-sale (POS) equipment in farmers' markets not currently participating in SNAP. FNS is committed to ensuring these funds are used for their intended purpose.
- The availability of these funds presents an opportunity for a win-win-win situation.
  - SNAP recipients get increased access to healthier and fresher foods;
  - Farmers and markets increase their customer base—and thus, their sales; and
  - Encourages consumption of locally-grown food.
- These are two-year funds, and therefore available to States through September 30, 2013, see <http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/ebt/pdfs/fm/FM-funds.pdf>.
- The funds can only be used to purchase or lease POS equipment for eligible farmers' markets or pay for SNAP wireless access for that equipment.
- ***Previously***, the funds were only available to “farmers' markets not currently participating in SNAP,” which were defined as markets that were not SNAP-authorized on or before November 18, 2011, the date the law providing the funds was enacted.
- ***New Development!*** FNS has determined the funds can also be used to acquire POS equipment for certain direct-marketing farmers. Such farmers must:
  - Not have been SNAP-authorized prior to November 18, 2011, and
  - Provide written assurance that they regularly participate (or will participate) in at least one farmers' market (1) that is not currently SNAP-authorized ***and*** (2) at which no other vendor is SNAP-authorized.
- Our sister Agency, USDA's Agriculture Marketing Service (AMS), maintains a list of farmers' markets operating nationwide, at: <http://search.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets/>. In addition, FNS will post, monthly, a list of SNAP-authorized markets, at: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/ebt/fm.htm>.

***To receive equipment acquired with these funds, markets must be on the AMS list, but not on the FNS list; or, in the case of direct-marketing farmers, participate in such a market.***

- In this way, we hope to increase SNAP visibility at such markets and encourage them to join.

- To ensure these dollars are expended appropriately, the following definitions must be followed:
  - Farmers' markets are multi-stall markets at which *farmer-producers* sell food products (fruits, vegetables, meat, dairy, grains, etc.) directly to the general public, at a central or fixed location.
  - Direct-marketing farmers are *farmer-producers* of food products sold directly to the public.

If you are interested in this funding opportunity, please contact your SNAP State agency (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/ebt/docs/State-List.docx> ).